

Message Text

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ACTION LAB-06

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TAGS: ELAB PGOV EG

SUBJECT: LABOR REACTION TO SUGGESTED RETURN OF
POLITICAL PARTIES

FOR LABATT

1. OFFICIAL LABOR UNION PERIODICAL, AL UMMAL, ANNOUNCED ON MONDAY
SEPT 16 THAT THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE EGYPTIAN
FEDERATION OF LABOR AND THE CHAIRMEN OF THE TRADE
UNIONS HELD AN EMERGENCY MEETING ON SATURDAY, SEPT 14
TO DISCUSS PRESIDENT SADAT'S PAPER ON THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE ARAB SOCIALIST UNION (ASU). THE CONFERENCE
REJECTED THE CALL "BY A FEW PERSONS IN NON-LABOR CIRCLES"
TO FORM POLITICAL PARTIES AS AN "OPEN CALL TO TOPPLE
THE ALLIANCE OF THE WORKING FORCES OF THE PEOPLE AND
TO LIQUIDATE THE ASU". A STATEMENT WAS ISSUED AT THE
CONCLUSION OF THE CONFERENCE: A) DECLARING ADHERENCE
TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE JULY 23 REVOLUTION, B) INSISTING
THAT 50 PER CENT OF ASU SEATS SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE GIVEN TO
WORKERS AND FARMERS, C) REJECTING ANY CALL TO FORM
POLITICAL PARTIES, AND D) ANNOUNCING A DECISION TO FORM
A HEARING COMMITTEE AT THE FEDERATION OF LABOR
WHICH WILL SOLICIT THE VIEWS OF THE WORKERS.

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2. THE NEWSPAPER ALSO CARRIED A LONG ARTICLE (MORE THAN A PAGE) BY MINISTER OF MANPOWER AND CHAIRMAN OF THE EGYPTIAN FEDERATION OF LABOR, SALAH GHARIB, IN WHICH HE UNDERLINED THE POINTS INCLUDED IN THE STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE EFL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, REMINDING THE PEOPLE THAT "EGYPT OF 1974 IS NOT EGYPT OF 19521. A NUMBER OF COLUMNS APPEARED IN WHICH WORKERS DECLARED SUPPORT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ASU AND OPPOSED THE RETURN OF PARTIES; INCLUDED WERE "A WARNING TO THE ENEMIES OF THE JULY 23 REVOLUTION" BY SAID GOMAA, SECRETARY OF THE EFL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, AND "WORKERS OF EGYPT, BE ON THE ALERT*" BY SAYED EL ZEFTAWI, SECRETARY OF THE EFL FOR CULTURE AND TRAINING.

3. COMMENT: THIS SHRILL REACTION TO SUGGESTIONS FOR THE RETURN OF POLITICAL PARTIES REFLECTS THE REAL CONCERN OF MEMBERS OF THE MASSIVE, WELL-ENTRENCHED LABOR BUREAUCRACY, CREATED BY NASIR AND CLOSELY LINKED WITH ASU, THAT ANY CHANGES IN THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF REPRESENTATION WILL WEAKEN THEIR POSITIONS IN THE BUREAUCRACY AND MAY RESULT IN A RUPTURING OF THE FAIRLY PLACID AND UNDEMANDING LIVES THEY HAVE LED FOR SO MANY YEARS. A SIMILAR REACTION, FOR MUCH THE SAME REASONS, IS USUALLY NOTED TO SUGGESTIONS OF INCREASING THE IMPORTANCE AND/OR SIZE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR OF THE ECONOMY.
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